

ON THE UNIVERSITY RIGHT

WHY SUPERSTITION ?

THE "AMITYVILLE" HORROR?

by Joseph M.J. Sanlei

The other evening I had the misfortune of entering Bernadine Hall (which is usually a great pleasure) and overhearing a conversation which was then occurring in the main lounge of that building. The conversation centred around an advertisement that had just been shown on the tube concerning that latest bit of Hollywood schmaltz known as The Amityville Horror. The real horror, as far as I am concerned, is the fact that here, in one of the most advanced societies in the world, in the latter half of the 20th Century A.D., there are still to be found university educated people who maintain a belief in such foolishness as ghosts, demons, devils, the "power" of witchcraft, voodoo, etcetera ad nauseum! I would have hoped that at least those of us in the developed First World would have been able to lay to rest those tidbits of our ignorant past in the Dark Ages, where they so richly belonged.

Perhaps the traditional modes of metaphysical expression, which for thousands of years was found in religious tradition, has become either inadequate or too complicated to be understood by those seeking our return to that age before the great Enlightenment. Have the Catholic, Mainline Protestant, and Jewish traditions in which most

of us had found expression, and which to a large extent shaped Canada and the Western World, become no longer sufficient to meet our (supernatural) metaphysical needs? If this is so, then it seems, quite sadly, that rejection of the traditional faiths has been because of the rational acceptance of science that these faiths have made. The only churches whose membership rolls are rising at a faster pace than the Bay of Fundy tides are those

who, by their rejection of scientific truth, are quaintly called "Old time religion", id est Fundamental beliefs including (among other 16th century things) a belief including a personal Devil, upon whom all manner of things may be blamed.

In this so-called "Age of Reason" how is it possible that there are millions of faithful, at times fanatical, followers of astrology, demonology, scientology, and all of the other

phony "ologys" festering in our midst?! Otherwise rational individuals become incensed and indignant when their irrational beliefs in star charts, date of birth planetary movements, and personal demons are attacked for what they are in reality: garbage! Throughout the United States and Canada there are even people, acting under the pretext of science, who call themselves "creationists" whose desire it is to have

Biblical creation (as found in Genesis) taught in public school systems across North America as a replacement of, or at par with, evolution as "scientific" in its own right. Through the "miracles" of T.V. and radio, one may listen to the ravings of an (if one may excuse the expression) ungodly number of charlatans. Modern day "Elmer Gantrys" who "sell" God as is sold so many other commodities, and reap in the bucks with promises of salvation!

Returning to whence we began on this trek through the bizarre, The Amityville Horror, we find that, as is the case with most of the supposed "true" stories of the occult (others are merely misunderstood natural phenomena) it is in reality no more than a deliberately perpetuated

hoax. The "haunted" house in Amityville, which for all intents and purposes seems to be a quiet middle class dwelling on Long Island, New York, is in

reality a quiet middle class dwelling on Long Island, New York. No ghosts, apparitions, demons, doors to hell, or any other of the mysterious happenings claimed in an over-rated, over-priced book or in the even more sensationalized film version thereof, are to be found. As with most fairy tales, this one might be a nice story for a rainy night, but don't take it to heart. If our civilization is to be preserved we must exorcize the ignorance of our past, which is the stupidity of our present. Or shall we all gather together one night to bay at the moon!!

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